

20 March 2017

Review of the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act
Regulatory Strategy and Design
Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning
PO Box 500
EAST MELBOURNE VIC 8002

Dear Sir/Madam

Review of the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988

Bass Coast Shire welcomes the State Governments commitment to biodiversity through the review of the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988* consultation paper.

Bass Coast Shire's prosperity comes from its environment which, in turn, drives its economy through tourism and agriculture. The biodiversity and ecology of the Shire must be valued and the tools available for local and State government to act in a considered and responsible manner to achieve environmental sustainability and sustainable development in balance.

Council support the comments in the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) submission to the review. We particularly welcome the move towards landscape or area based responses incorporating multi stakeholder cooperation and collaboration. This approach is important to achieving positive biodiversity outcomes to address the decline in species and genetic diversity.

For the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988* to have currency and be useful it must underpin and give a platform for action within the State Government's *Protecting Victoria's Environment Biodiversity 2036*. The 'natural capital' within our Shire must be preserved for intergenerational benefit.

Bass Coast Shire Council is currently developing a Biodiversity Biolinks Plan in collaboration with DELWP and the West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority. The Plan will identify landscape scale biolink areas of high value remnant vegetation and provide direction for strategic linkages between these patches. Council are working with the Bass Coast Landcare Network and consulting with stakeholders and community members to road test these maps and prioritise on-ground works. This collaborative approach with agencies and community, with a

tangible and visual outcome (i.e. landscape maps) could be used as a template for other regions to use, when complete. This project and methodology meets a number of the objectives and improvements the Act is aiming to achieve, including:

- Protect, restore, and enhance biodiversity
- Strategic planning
- Proactive approach
- Collaboration with stakeholders
- Measurable landscape /area based planning (via mapping)

If you would like further information, or to discuss Council's submission please contact [REDACTED]

Yours sincerely

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